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ABSTRACT

In the context of the growing movement towards outcome based education, this paper provides a basic overview of this movement and its implications for the professional preparation of health educators, particularly as implemented in Pennsylvania. After listing the three basic principles and four concepts of outcome based education, the paper describes Pennsylvania reforms which mandate the revision of secondary school curricula for an outcome based education focus. Of a total of 53 student learning outcomes, 6 are in the academic area of wellness and fitness; the paper notes that these will be the starting point for curriculum development. The paper lists the six health and wellness outcomes, describes the teaching strategies for preservice school health education students in conformity with the reforms, and describes some practical instructional plans and strategies for teaching a preservice teacher education course in this area. Final sections describe a completed student learning outcome poster and suggest strategies for preparation of course syllabi and structures based on outcome based education. (JB)

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Preparing School Health Educators for Outcome Based Education: Consideration for Professional Preparation Programs

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Introduction

One of the most significant shifts in the educational paradigm has involved the focus on "outcome based education" . The restructuring of academic curricula to address the basic concepts of outcome based education is growing rapidly. Pressures from society to improve the knowledge and skill levels of today's students and overall dissatisfaction with the status of public school education have combined to alter the way in which schools prepare students for the future. Although outcome based education has received considerable press in the field of education, very little has been written which addresses the impact of outcome based education on the preparation of health educators. The purpose of this session is to provide a basic overview of outcomes based education and implications for the professional preparation of health educators.

Application of Outcome Based Education to Health Education

Outcome based education is founded on three basic principles: 1) All students can learn and succeed (although not in the same way); 2) Success breeds success; and 3) schools control the conditions of success (Spady & Marshall, 1991). Outcome based education is education that is learner-centered, results-oriented and is founded on the belief that all individuals can learn. In this system the following concepts are emphasized: 1) what is to be learned is clearly identified; 2) learner progress is based on demonstrated achievement; 3) multiple instructional and assessment strategies are available to meet the needs of each learner; and 4) time and assistance are provided for each

learner to reach maximum potential (Towers, 1992). Outcome based education practitioners begin by determining the knowledge, competencies, and qualities they want students to be able to demonstrate when they finish school and face the challenges of the adult world. Therefore "exit outcomes" are first established which are appropriate for graduation. Next, "benchmarks" or "enabling outcomes" are developed for each specific grade level from K -12. The curriculum developers then design curricula and instructional systems with the intent that all students will ultimately be able to demonstrate the age appropriate "enabling outcomes" as well as the graduation "exit outcomes".

The state of Pennsylvania has recently established regulations which mandate the revision of curricula from a "specific number of hours" to an outcome based education focus. To provide a framework for this reform the State Board of Education with assistance from numerous constituents developed 53 student learning outcomes required for graduation from high school into the following nine academic areas of: mathematics, arts and humanities, citizenship, communications, wellness and fitness; environment and ecology, home economics, and career education and work. (Pennsylvania Department of Education, 1993). Each of the 53 student learning outcomes represent a statement of what is expected for students to know or be able to demonstrate before graduating from high school. The new curriculum regulations have identified six student learning outcomes in the academic area of wellness and fitness. These six student learning outcomes are listed below. These six student learning outcomes will serve as the starting point for curriculum development. It is important to note that although the academic area of wellness and fitness addresses

content area in health education, there are numerous student learning outcomes within the other eight academic areas which can be met through K-12 comprehensive school health education.

PENNSYLVANIA'S DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR WELLNESS AND FITNESS

* All students develop knowledge of injury prevention and treatment and the ability to respond appropriately in emergency situations.

* All students recognize and demonstrate the ability to apply dietary guidelines to meet nutritional needs at various stages of life.

* All students demonstrate their knowledge of the benefits associated with physical fitness and good personal health habits including health promotion and disease prevention.

* All students identify the advantages of avoiding, and develop the skills to avoid, tobacco, alcohol, and substance use.

* All students demonstrate individual development in motor fitness and physical fitness, including aerobic fitness and skills in lifetime sports and outdoor activities, to promote lifelong activity.

* All students demonstrate leadership skills and the ability to work cooperatively in team sports or other developmentally appropriate group activities.

The following teaching strategy was created to increase the knowledge and skills of preservice school health education students However, this activity also is relevant for community health educators working with the schools as well as other health educators working with school districts to develop K-12 health curriculum. Finally, this activity is beneficial for current K-12 teachers and graduate students in health education programs.

Objectives - Through this learning activity the students will:

1. Identify the basic principles of outcome based education.
2. Explain terminology common to the outcome based education framework.
3. Describe the impact of the outcome based education paradigm within the total educational experience - from students to teachers to administrators.
4. Develop age appropriate learning activities within health education content areas which will meet the stated student learning outcome.

Implementation of the Activity

1. In preparation for this activity the instructor should spend a minimal of 1 - 2 class sessions on the evolution of outcome based education as well as the principles and t terminology associated with outcome based education.

2. Organize students into groups of 4 -5. Provide each groups a sheet of newsprint and a color marker. On the top of the newsprint students will place the heading **"How Will Outcome Based Education Change or Impact. . . .** Students will brainstorm responses for : **students, teachers, administrators, parents, professional preparation programs, employers, and curriculum.**

3. Allow 15 - 20 minutes for students to identify at least two responses for each example. Students then will share their responses with the entire class and the instructor will address misunderstandings and delineate or clarify the impact of outcome based education within the educational system.

4. Using the student learning outcomes listed previously , place one student learning outcome on a large sheet of newsprint. On each sheet of paper divide the paper into three segments by labeling one segment "elementary (K-6); "middle (7 - 9); "secondary (10 - 12)". As a result you will have six posters representing a different student learning outcome. Each student learning outcome poster is then taped on a classroom wall. Each group of 4-5 students will receive a group number and a different colored marker.

5. At each poster the students will describe one possible teaching strategy for each designated grade level. Once a teaching strategy has been identified for each of the three grade levels the students will then proceed to the next student learning outcome poster. To continue this activity the teacher instructs the groups to proceed through each of the student learning outcome posters. This process will continue until all

groups of students have completed each student learning outcome poster.

6. To process this activity the teacher places the following check list / evaluation criteria for each teaching strategy at the elementary, middle, and secondary level on the board:

1) age appropriateness;

2) appropriate for the student learning outcome content area listed and the ;

3) degree to which the learning strategy helps students to meet the stated student learning outcome. The teacher will then review each student learning outcome poster and ask for group input about each evaluation item. At this time students may have the opportunity to revise the learning activities to meet the evaluation criteria.

7. As a follow-up to this learning activity each group of students may then develop lesson plans which will include age appropriate general learning objectives, detailed description of a learning activity and a description of a student assessment that will demonstrate whether or not a student has met the stated student learning outcomes.

SAMPLE OF A COMPLETED STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOME POSTER

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOME - All students recognize and demonstrate the ability to apply dietary guidelines to meet nutritional needs at various stages of life.

ELEMENTARY (K-5)

- Construct a mobile representing the Food Pyramid
- Write a poem about your favorite healthy food
- Create a diorama of "healthy" and "unhealthy" food labels

MIDDLE (6-8)

- Create a shopping list which includes a selection of foods from the food pyramid
- Write a sample of a healthy food label
- Create a "rap" song about the nutrients

SECONDARY (9-12)

- Develop a family tree which shows the relationship between nutrition and disease
- Create a Public Service Announcement about healthy eating for pregnant mothers
- Design a healthy cookbook incorporating the dietary guidelines and the food pyramid.

Implications for Professional Preparation Programs

The following strategies are suggested for the preparation of course syllabi and course structure based on the principles of outcome based education:

1. State course objectives in performance based language. Each objective must clearly state the expected student performance.
2. Match all course objectives to specific assessment strategies.
3. Course content must match the stated course objectives and assessment strategies.
4. Develop assessment strategies which provide opportunities for students to **demonstrate** their ability to meet the stated course objectives.
5. Develop assessment strategies which require students to create a product or demonstrate a skill.
6. Design a grading rubric for each assessment strategy with clearly stated criteria for evaluation.
7. Create individual student portfolios which include samples and documentation of student work.

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